GOODNESS

Proved to be the BEST

PROTECTION

FROM THE

ARRESTS

OF ALL

HARMES.

In A SERMON Preached before the University, upon *Innocents Day*, in *Great* St. *MARIES* Church in

CAMBRIDGE.

By *Robert Neville*, B. D. Rector of *Ansty*.

LONDON,
Printed for *Benj. Billingsley*, at the Printing-Press under the *Piazza* of the *Royal Exchange*, 1687.

GOODNESS

Proved to be the BEST

PROTECTION

FROM THE

ARRESTS

OF

HARMES.

In a SERMON Preached before the University, upon *Innocents Day*, in Great S. MARIES Church in

CAMBRIDGE.

By *Robert Neville*, B. D. Rector of *Ansly*.

LONDON,
Printed for *Benj. Tooke*, at the Printing-Press under the Piazza of the *Royal Exchange*, 1687.

To the Worſhipful my much Honoured Friend,

RALPH FREEMAN, Eſq;

One of His Majeſty's Deputy-Lieutenants and Juſtices of the Peace for the County of

HERTFORD.

Honoured Sir,

YOU may perhaps be ſurpriſed to find your Name Uſurped by me, to Grace and Honour this trifle of a Sermon; unleſs you pleaſe to conſider, that it is the uſual Fate of Perſons of your obliging Temper, to receive Perſecutions of this Nature, as Returns of your Candour and Goodneſs: And I have only this to atone for the Preſumption of this Dedication; that I thought no perſon ſo fit to Patronize a diſcourſe of Goodneſs, as him, in whom all thoſe bright Stars, that make up the Conſtellation, ſhine with ſo great a luſtre.

Among all other Virtues which are reſplendent in you, give me leave to trumpet abroad your exemplary Sobriety, which does approach ſo near to ſingularity in this age, that I can ſcarcely pay you your due praiſes, without a Satyr on moſt others; who, by their intemperate Quaffing, make their Houſes, like thoſe Inchanted

chanted Castles spoken of in Romances, *which when a man hath once enter'd, there's no finding his way out again, by reason of an Inchanted Fountain there, the free Drinking whereof layes him and his reason both asleep: So that now a man can hardly avoid the Imputation of a Rude and Uncivil, unless he lose the Reputation of a Sober Man, and Sacrifice his health to the humour of his drunken Associates, and his Soul to the Devil, whose Factors they are, and for whose interest they drive on that drunken Trade: But to these inconveniencies no Person is exposed under your Roof, where tho nothing (that may speak a generous and hearty welcom) is wanting, yet you are a professed Enemy to all Excess; and your Visitants may say the same of themselves, which* Socrates *did of his Scholars,* that they were well the next day. *I have dwelt so long upon this part of your Commendations, not because you deserve not greater, but because I am not able to express them in other Subjects; like an ill Swimmer, I have willingly staid long in my own depth; and though I am desirous to perform more, yet I am loth to venture too far in the large Ocean of your Praises; least by my ill commending your other Virtues, I should so far incur your displeasure as to forfeit that Title, which I value my Self upon; Namely, That of*

Honoured Sir,

Your Most Faithful and Humble Servant

R. Neville.

Ansty, *Sept.* 23th. 1687.

THE CHRISTIANS BEST PROTECTION

From the Arreſts of all

HARMS.

1 Epiſtle general of St. *Peter*, chap. 3. ver. 13.

And who is he that will Harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

WEre all who make a fair and plauſible ſhew of Religion, really ſuch as they pretend to be; diſcourſes of this nature would be no more needful than the Commendations of

of a great beauty, to one who is already a paſſionate admirer of it. But on the contrary we ſee, how common it is for men, firſt to throw dirt in the face of Virtue and Religion, and then perſwade themſelves 'tis her natural complexion; they repreſent it to themſelves in a ſhape not pleaſing to them, and then bring that as a plea, why they give it no better entertainment: Men muſt know, that though Virtue and Goodneſs be ſo fair and complaiſant as to draw our affections, yet ſhe is ſo modeſt withall; as to expect to be courted by us; and it may be deny our firſt ſuit, to prompt us to a ſecond addreſs, and heighten our importunity: and nothing hath oftner forbid the Banns between men and Religion, than their Neglect and Contempt of her, and abuſing her by falſe and ſlanderous reports; by ſaying, *That Religion is the Mother of Danger*; and that the place of her abode, (like that of *Archimedes* grave) is *ſeptus Vepribus & dumetis*, beſet with Briars and Brambles. I have read of the Cannibal *Anakims* in the Confines of the Promiſed Land, that devour all that Travel towards that Region; but let not our Melancholick and Aguiſh fancies tranſplant all theſe into *Chriſtendom*, and make them Emblems of thoſe Harms and Dangers, that attend thoſe who are followers of Goodneſs;

neſs; don't let us fancy that there ſtands an Angel with a Flaming Sword, to keep us out of this Paradiſe of Virtue; nor report to the World, that if a Man hath no other guard but his own *Innocence*, he lies open to the aſſaults of all dangers and misfortunes, which is a miſtake ſufficiently confuted by St. *Peter*, who aſſures us, *That Goodneſs and Innocence is our beſt Protection from the Arreſts of all Harms*, in theſe words of the Text. *And who is he that will harm ye, if ye be followers of that which is* (a) *good?* Upon which words *Vorſtius* makes this Paraphraſe; *Who either will or can harm you?* as if the Apoſtle had ſaid, you that are followers of Goodneſs, may believe your ſelves ſecure, and above the Sphere of all Harms: For there are ſcarce any ſo impious that will, or if they are ſo maliciouſly bent as to attempt it, they ſhall not have power to Harm you: which being premiſed, the Text will fall the more naturally into theſe two parts.

(a) *Quis eſt q. i nocere aut vilit aut poſſit?*

First, The Chriſtians Protection from all Harms in theſe words, *Who is he that will harm ye?* or as *Vorſtius* gloſſes upon the words, *Who will or can harm ye?*

Secondly, The Qualification that entitles him to this Protection, namely his being a Retainer to Goodneſs, or as my Text calls him, *A follower of that which is good.*

Firſt on the firſt, or the Chriſtians Protection from all Harms, in theſe words, *Who is he that will Harm ye?* a Chriſtian is ἐξω βέλους, out of gun-ſhot, no real evil can annoy or moleſt him: He hath an Almighty protection to skreen and ſecure him from it; if he will put on God's Livery, the Robes of Righteouſneſs and enter into Gods ſervice; if he will get ſome dependance upon the Court of Heaven, wait upon God, and become his Servant in Goodneſs and Innocence, he ſhall have a Protection from the Arreſts of all Harms; and this brings me to the ſecond general part in the Text, where we have

Secondly, The Qualification that entitles a Chriſtian to this Protection, namely, his being a Retainer to Goodneſs, or (as my Text calls him) *A follower of that which is good: Rari quippe Boni,* now becauſe good men are ſcarce and Rare, ſo that by the great ſcarcity and dearth thereof, it is not eaſie to diſcover what

True

True Goodneſs is: it will be a worthy diſquiſition to Examine,

Firſt, *What Goodneſs is?*

Secondly, *What are the good Fruits and Effects of it.* And

Thirdly, *From what Harms and Evils all Retainers to it are Protected?*

Firſt, I ſhall Examine, *What Goodneſs is?*

Goodneſs is a glorious Conſtellation, made up of theſe bright Stars, theſe Heavenly Virtues and Graces, Love, Compaſſion, Courteſie, Abſtaining from Sin, doing works of Mercy, Unity, Peaceableneſs; as you may ſee in the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh verſes of the Chapter of my Text; where the Apoſtle exhorts the Jewiſh Converts to be of *One Mind, having Compaſsion one of another, to Love as Brethren, to be Pitiful, to be Courteous, not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrarywiſe Bleſsing: For he that will love Life, and ſee good Dayes, let him refrain his Tongue from evil, and his Lips that they ſpeak no guile: Let him eſchew evil and do good, let him ſeek Peace and enſue it.* After an enumeration of all which Chriſtian Graces, having in the twelfth verſe of this Chapter, de-

red Gods favour and kindneſs to good Men that are poſſeſt of them, he gives them this Protection from all Harms, in theſe words of my Text, *And who is he that will harm ye, if ye be followers of that which is good?* Of all the Attributes, by which a man may be ſtyled, Goodneſs hath the chief place and ſoveraignty; and therefore God was called by the Heathens, firſt *Optimus*, then *Maximus*; firſt, Good, and then Great; there being no true Greatneſs without Goodneſs; and therefore that execrable and bloody Tyrant, who cauſed his Executioners to turn the Cradles of the Innocent Babes of *Bethlehem* into Graves, and rock them into a Dead ſleep, was improperly ſtyled *Herod the Great*, becauſe he was far from being *Herod the Good.* A mere great Man without Goodneſs, is only ſo much Nobility by Patent, not by Merit; or ſo much Heraldry without Honour; he ſtayes perhaps a while in the World, but 'tis only to fill up a number, and when he's gone there wants One, and there's an End: But when greatneſs and Goodneſs meet in One Perſon, he is highly to be valued and eſteemed, like an Emrald or a Ruby ſet in Gold,

——————aut ubi flavo
Argentum, Pariuſve Lapis cum cingitur auro;

Eve-

Every man is to be esteemed and honoured as he is set down in Gods Herauldry, and there Goodness hath the pre-eminence, *Proverbs chapter* 12. *verse* 26. *The Righteous is better then his Neighbour*, all good Men are of a Divine Extraction; they may derive their Pedigree from God himself; and say with St. *Paul*, and the Heathen Poet whom he quotes, Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν. *We are his Off-spring*, *Acts* 17. 28. and may therefore boast of his Celestial Pedigree, with better reason than *Glaucus* did in *Homer*, in these words,

Ταύτης τοι γωνῆσθαι καὶ αἵματος ἔυχομαι εἶναι.

I glory and boast of this Celestial descent and extraction: and St. *Hierom* would say of *Paula* a Noble Virgin, descended from *Æneas* on the Fathers side, and from *Agamemnon* on the Mothers, that she was *Genere Nobilis*, *Sanctitate Nobilior*; Noble in Stock but more Noble in Goodness and Sanctity; κράτος ἐν γῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος θεοσεβίστατος, the pious and good man is the best Man in all regards, saith *Clemens* of *Alexandria*.

External Power and grandeur may render us dreadful and formidable; depth of Learning may raise us in the esteem of the World,

and

and make us the objects of all mens admiration; our large Revenues and vast Estates may purchase us external Respect and Honour, make all men strike Sail to us, and pay us the constant tribute of outward Obeisance; but that which commands mens Hearts, charms their Affections, and chains their Souls to us, is Goodness; which is a great Friend to humane Conversation, the Foundress of all Societies; all other excellencies (how great soever) appear Melancholy and solitary; they only put on a glorious Aspect when in the possession of one, or few persons; and once made common grow cheap and contemptible; but Goodness is better natured, and of so publick a Spirit, that without being communicable, it may no more be called Goodness, than the Sun without its diffusive and expansive light, may be called the Sun: as the good mans Religion, so also is his goodness and compassion Catholick: He thinks it a kind of moral Judaism, to tye it either to persons or places; as knowing that he is commanded by St. *Paul*, *Galatians* 6. 10. *To do good to all men*; and his language is what *Tullie*'s was, in one of his Epistles to *Lentulus*, *I* (b) *endeavour only that I may not be wanting, either to Friends or Strangers, by my Pains, Counsels, or La-*

(b) *Tantùm enitor ut neque amicis, neque etiam alienioribus, operâ, consilio, labore, desim.*

Labours, and he really is, what St. *Hierom* adviſed *Pammachius* to be, *cæcorum oculi, manus debilium, claudorum pes*, eyes to the blind, a hand to the weak, and a foot to the lame, and conſequently muſt needs be very acceptable, and dear to them; and this brings me to the ſecond particular, namely,

The Good Fruits and Effects of Goodneſs, which are theſe that follow.

1. 'Tis a Lure to bring us the Love of Men.
2. It draws and attracts the Love of God.
3. It aſſimilates and makes us like God.

1. 'Tis a Lure, to bring us the Love of men; The good man may have that Character, which was given of the Roman Emperor *Veſpaſian*, *Deliciæ humani generis*, the Delight of Mankind, the darling of the World; for by his Courteſie, Charity, Civility, and Peaceableneſs, he obliges all men, makes all his Friends and thereby becomes alſo a Friend to himſelf; for as *Seneca* ſays, *Qui ſibi amicus omnibus amicus*, he that is a Friend to himſelf, is a Friend to all the World: the good man will, if it be poſſible, quarrel with no man; he is no mans Enemy,

nemy, and therefore no man is an Enemy to him; and we may ſay the ſame of him, that *Cornelius Nepos* did of *Pomponius Atticus*, (c) He was infeſted with no Enmity, becauſe he hurt no man, and if he had received an injury, he was more willing to forget then to revenge it; ſo that goodneſs is the beſt Policy, even in a worldly account; 'tis the beſt Decoy to allure men to our Friendſhip. There is no ſuch bait whereby to catch men as goodneſs is, and it may therefore borrow our Saviours words, which he ſpake to *Peter* and *Andrew* his Brother, *Matthew* 4. 19. *Follow me and I will make you Fiſhers of men*: And then

(c) *Nullas inimicitias geſſit, quòd nec lædebat quenquam, neque ſi quam injuriam acceperat, malebat ulciſci quàm Obliviſci.*

2. Goodneſs draws and attracts the Love of of God; Εὐσεβεσὶν δὲ βροτοῖς γανέμει τόσον ὅσσον Ὀλύμπῳ. God delights as much in good men as in Heaven it ſelf; and *Hierocles*, who recites that golden verſe of *Pythagoras*, does himſelf affirm, *That God hates no man*; but as for the good man, (d) he embraces him with an extraordinary Affection: and it was a ſaying much uſed by the *Pythagoreans*, That (e) God hath not in the whole Earth, a more familiar place of Reſidence, than the pure, the good Soul. A good man is Gods Heaven upon Earth; and therefore

(d) τὸν δ' Ἀγαθὸν διαφερόντως ἀσπάζεται.

(e) ψυχῆς καθαρᾶς κἀγαθῆς τόπον οἰκειότερον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς θεὸς οὐκ ἔχει.

fore when the Philoſopher *Heraclitus* came by accident into a houſe where a good man dwelt, he cryed out preſently, *Hic Dij habitant*, the Gods dwell here; the Philoſopher tells us that thoſe things (*f*) which are like and related to us, are for the moſt part pleaſing; and how pleaſing then muſt the good man be to God, who reſembles him in Goodneſs?

(*f*) τὰ ὁμοῖα καὶ συγγενῆ ἡδέα ἐστὶ τὸ πολύ.

1. *Tamerlain* being preſented with a Pot of Gold, askt whether the Gold had his Fathers Stamp upon it, and being told that it had not his Fathers, but the Roman Stamp, he refuſed to receive it; Goodneſs is Gods ſtamp, and as holy *Ignatius* tells us, *a good man* (*g*) *is a piece of Mony of Gods own Coin and Stamp*; now if God does not ſee his ſtamp of goodneſs upon us, he will never Own us for his. The very proper character, and eſſential Tincture of God, is nothing elſe but goodneſs: nay I may be bold to add, that God is therefore God, becauſe he is the higheſt and moſt perfect good: Whatſoever God doth in the World, he doth it, as 'tis ſuitable to the higheſt goodneſs; The firſt Idea and Copy whereof is his own Eſſence; virtue and goodneſs in the Creatures, as *Plato* well diſcourſes, are not therefore good becauſe God loves them, and will have them to be accoun-

(*g*) ὁ θεοσεβὴς Ἄνθρωπος Νομισμὰ ἐστιν τοῦ θεοῦ χαρακτῆρ.

ted ſuch; but rather, God therefore loves them, becauſe they are in themſelves ſimply good.

3. A third good Fruit and Effect of goodneſs, is, *That it Aſſimilates and makes us like God.*

Goodneſs is that wherein God himſelf doth moſt delight; and therefore all the Actions of our Saviour, while he was converſant here were but ſo many teſtifications of his Mercy and Goodneſs, without the leaſt tincture of ſeverity, two onely excepted, his driving the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple, and Curſing the Fig-tree; and yet in both theſe, his Mercy ſeemed to ride in Triumph, and make Judgment follow its triumphant Chariot; the firſt of theſe actions, though it brought ſome ſmall reproach and ſmart upon the objects of it, yet it did them no great Harm; and the ſecond had as ſmall a Taſt of ſeverity, as being exerciſed upon a barren-Tree, a dull ſenſeleſs Creature, uncapable of ſmart or puniſhment, but was meerly exemplary to us; Chriſt being pleaſed to puniſh our unfruitfulneſs in the Fig-tree, as the *Perſians* were accuſtomed to beat the garments in ſtead of the

bodies

bodies of their Grandees, when they had offended.

(g) *'Tis the best and highest piece of Religion to imitate and resemble the Object of our Worship*, says *Lactantius*. (h) *And a man cannot Worship him aright, whom he does not imitate*, says *Clemens* of *Alexandria*; we must therefore endeavour to imitate and resemble God in goodness; goodness being that God-like Quality, which exalts our humane Nature, sublimates and heightens it into Divinity, and makes us like God: and thus having shown you the good Fruits and Effects of goodness, I come now to shew you.

(g) *Summa est Religio imitari quem colis.*

(h) οὐδ' ἂν θεραπεύειν καὶ σέβειν τις δυνήσεται ἢ μιμούμενος.

Thirdly, *From what Harms and Mischiefs it Protects us*; as namely,

First, From all those Harms and Mischiefs that men can do us.

Secondly, From all the Harms and Mischiefs that arise from sin.

Thirdly, From those eternal Harms and Torments, which those who are strangers to goodness shall suffer in Hell. First on the

First, That goodness will protect us from all those Harms and Mischiefs that Men can do us; *Innocence is our most faithful guard*; *this is*

our (i) *most inexpugnable and strong Fortress*; *to be so good, so innocent, as to need No Guard, No Fortress*, says *Pliny* in his *Panegyrick* to *Trajan*. It was *Seneca's* complaint, *that he*(k)*could rarely meet with any, that might venture to live with open doors*, and 'tis the good man only that dares live so; his innocence will shield him from all Harms; from the worst that men can breathe or Act against him: all the Harm that men can do us, is either,

(i) *Fidelissima est Custodia ipsa innocentia. Haec Arx inaccessa, hoc inexpugnabile munimentum, munimento non egere.*

(k) *Vix quenquam inveni qui aperto ostio vivere posset.*

First, *By Words*, or,
Secondly, *By Actions*.

And the good, the Innocent man, is proof against both these

First, Men cannot hurt or harm him by *Words*. His innocency is a shelter, a Sanctuary from the poisoned Arrows of a slanderous and evil Tongue: The whole Earth is not big enough to cast a shadow, totally to Eclipse a good Mans credit; the Teeth of his enemies malice many times do but file his innocence the brighter; and (like rough Diamonds) the more 'tis cut it shines with the greater lustre: They are not only the beauties of a Face, which draw new Graces from those black Spots and Patches, (which one would think) should disfigure

figure them: thoſe ſhadows which a ſlanderous Tongue caſts upon Innocence, makes it but the more remarkable, in the ſame manner as an Eclipſe is a cauſe of the Suns being more taken notice of: The teſtimony of a good Conſcience is more to be valued by us than all Reports, though there were neither Friends, nor Enemies, to Praiſe or Reproach us; Beauty and Comelineſs will always find ſatisfaction enough in the glaſs, Deformity vexation: now the Conſcience does the ſame for Vertue or Vice, that a Mirrour or Glaſs does for faces: We ſhould therefore ſeek our Conſolation in our own Breaſts and Conſciences, and when we have done all we can, to deſerve a good name, we may ſlight and contemn a bad one; and be no more troubled when we are ſaid to be guilty of what we are not; than if we were ſaid to be ſick, when we find our ſelves well; and what wiſe man will be troubled at that, which ſhould rather move his laughter? And as goodneſs gives us a protection from all harms by *Words*, ſo

Secondly, Does it ſhelter us from all the Harms that can ariſe from the *Actions of Men*; *Men can but kill the body*, the death thereof terminates

minates and bounds their Malice ; ἀποκτεῖναι μὲν δύναται βλάψαι δὲ μή, ſays *Socrates* ; they may kill but they cannot hurt the good and Innocent ; Death being no more to them than a dark Entry to a glorious Palace, or a Shady Wilderneſs to a promiſed *Canaan* ; thus *Herod's* Tragical and Barbarous Cruelty acted upon the Innocent Babes of *Bethlehem*, did but accelerate and haſten their eternal bliſſe ; theſe tender Plants were but tranſplanted from Earth to Heaven, but removed from their Earthly mothers breaſt, to their heavenly Fathers boſom ; the firſt bloſſoms of their Infancy were by a compendious improvement ripen'd into heavenly Fruit ; God lent them the Wings of a Dove to fly to their Eternal reſt, before ſome of them were able to uſe their Feet. Now that goodneſs, that Innocence, will ſhelter us from all the harms that can ariſe from the *Actions of Men*, I ſhall further prove to you by theſe two Reaſons and Arguments.

1. Becauſe it procures us Almighty God for our Protector.

2. Becauſe it procures us the good Angels for our Guard.

1. Be-

1. Becauſe it procures us Almighty God for our Protector, and this is intimated to us in the verſe foregoing my Text, *for the Eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous*, ſo that he may with confidence borrow thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſalm* 56. 11. *In God have I put my truſt, I will not fear what man can do unto me*; or ſay as *Paris* did in *Homer*, *God* (*l*) *is on our ſide*, and if God be with him what need he care or value, who is againſt him? One in *Livy* ſaid, (*m*) *That he had Forces and Strength enough, having* Decius *on his ſide, and that he could never have too many Enemies.* This a good man may apply to himſelf, and ſay, that God alone is Forces and Strength enough, and having him his Friend and Aſſiſtant, he can never have Enemies enough to deſerve his fear, but may buoy up himſelf with thoſe words of Holy *Anſelm* (*n*) *That none can hurt him unleſs they can firſt conquer God*; unleſs they can overcome Omnipotency it ſelf, ſlay Immortality, and confound the whole Hoſt of Heaven: As they ſay in Philoſophy, *That the Concupiſcible faculty of the Soul ſets the Iraſcible on work*; *So Gods Love to the Good and Innocent, quickens and incenſes his Wrath againſt their Enemies.* A ſenſe whereof encouraged *Tertullian* to diſcourſe at this rate to *Scapula* the Preſident of *Africa*,

(l) Θεὸς εἶσι ϗ ἡμῖν.

(m) *Satis ſibi Copiarum cum Publio Decio, & nunquam nimium hoſtium fore.*

(n) *Nemo te lædat niſi qui deum vincat.*

Africa, (o) *That no City ſhould go unpuniſht, where their innocent blood had been ſhed*; and he gives him a Catalogue of ſeveral Preſidents, *who* (p) *when at the point of death, were touched with ſome remorſe for their Afflicting the Innocent Chriſtians*: and that in particular *Vigellius Saturninus*, who firſt drew the Sword of Perſecution againſt them was deprived of his eyes. And that *Claudius Herminianus* in *Cappadocia*, after he had handled them with great Cruelty, was, whilſt alone in his *Pretorian* Palace, ſtruck with a ſtrange Plague, and over-run with noiſom Worms; and then he makes a warm and cloſe Addreſs to *Scapula* himſelf; who having lately condemned innocent *Mavilus* to the Beaſts, was ſeized with a ſharp Diſtemper; deſiring him to forbear Θεομαχεῖν, *to fight againſt God.*

(o) *Nulla Civitas impunè latura eſt ſanguinis noſtri Effuſionem.*

(p) *Qui in fine vitæ ſuæ recordati ſunt deliquiſſe quòd vexâſſent Chriſtianos.*

Thus alſo was *Herod Aſcalonita* ſmitten with a ſignal Vengeance from Heaven, after the bloody Maſſacre of thoſe poor Innocents, which he Sacrificed to his Pride and Cruelty: his puniſhment being a complicated Judgment, made up of Tortures both of Soul and Body; his Bowels, which were ſtrangers to all Compaſſion, were tortured with an intimate and inward

ward heat, (q) *a ſlow fire, which to the outward Senſe ſeemed not ſo vehement*; but did inwardly afflict and torment him, as *Joſephus* tells us; and his body was the ſubject of as many Tortures and Convulſions, as his Mind *was of Terrors and* (r) *Diſtractions*; every blow he received ſeemed to come from Heaven, and inflicted by the ſtrong hand of an enraged Deity: Every Creature (when God calls) is a Souldier to fight for the Good and Innocent; the whole Militia of Heaven, even thouſands of Angels are Auxiliary Forces to them; and this brings me to the ſecond reaſon, why Goodneſs will ſhelter us from all harms, that can ariſe from the *Actions of Men*; and that is,

(q) Πῦρ δὲ μαλακὸν ἦν πυρίδος χλιαρᾶς.

(r) Ποικίλοις παθεσιν διημερίζετο.

2. Becauſe it procures the good Angels for our Guard, *Pſalm* 34. 7. *The Angel of the Lord encamps about them that fear him, and delivers them*; Infinite Legions of Angels attend God in Heaven, and every ſingle Angel is as ſtrong as a whole Army of Men; one Angel in the Book of Kings, is ſent out againſt an Army of the *Aſſyrians*;

and in one Night a Hundred Fourſcore and Five Thouſand perſons dye by his hand; now all the Angels and Hoſt of Heaven are the good man's Lifeguard, and what humane Power is able to withſtand them? The preſence and aſſiſtance of Angels to good men is no new thing, though their apparition is now very rare; they had peculiar care over good Men in antient times. *Lot* was led out of *Sodom* by Angels: And *Matthew chapter* 2. *verſe* 13. *An Angel appeared to Joſeph to warn him to fly into Ægypt, with the young Child, The Holy Jeſus*; whoſe Life was chiefly ſought by *Herod*, when he dy'd and diſcoloured all the Coaſts of *Bethlehem* with the blood of ſo poor Innocents. An Angel delivers St. *Peter* out of Priſon, *Acts, chapter* 5. *verſe* 19. An Angel Comforts St. *Paul* in the Tempeſt, *Acts chapter* 27. *verſe* 23. And *Socrates* (in His Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory) tells us that when the Citizens of *Conſtantinople* were dejected, for Fear leaſt the *Perſians* ſhould overcome the *Romans*, to whoſe protection many Chriſtians had committed themſelves, a Company of Angels appeared to ſome,

who

who were Travelling to *Conſtantinople*, and bid them chear up the Spirits of the Inhabitants with this joyful News, that the *Romans* ſhould defeat the *Perſians*, and come off Victorious. And our own Hiſtorians make mention of a Celeſtial Herald, an Angel from Heaven, who appearing to *JAMES* the Fourth King of *Scotland*, adviſed him not to Fight his intended Battel with the Engliſh; which Counſel he neglecting, Himſelf with moſt of his Nobles and Army fell in that fatal Battel.

And though the appearance of Angels is not now to be expected by us, becauſe never promiſed; and converſe with them is a Bleſſing which our ſtate of infirmity cannot bear; yet is not their Miniſtry wholly ceaſed, they ſtill (though inviſibly) ſuccour and help us, *Hebrews chapter* 1. *verſe* 14. *are they not all Miniſtring Spirits, ſent forth to Miniſter for them, who ſhall be Heirs of Salvation?* And this ſhall ſuffice for the proof, that goodneſs will protect us from all thoſe harms that men can do us either by Words or Actions. I now proceed to ſhew you.

Secondly, That Goodneſs will ſhield us from all the Harms and Miſchiefs that ariſe from Sin. There is incomparably more trouble in the ways of Sin, than in thoſe of Goodneſs and Virtue: Every notorious Sin is naturally attended with ſome inconvenience, of Harm, Danger or Diſgrace, which the ſinner ſeldom conſiders till the ſin be committed, and then he is in a Labyrinth; and in ſeeking the way out of a preſent inconvenience, he intangles himſelf in more.

There is a Divine *Nemeſis* that attends wicked men; and Sin and the Fear of the Divine Vengeance are chained together, as the *Romans* did their Malefactors to the Souldiers who were to be their Keepers and Executioners: The ſinner is almoſt always haunted with inward gripes and twinges of guilt, though ſometimes he is not puniſht here viſibly, nor ſcourged with a market Laſh.

And who would not rather dye a thouſand times than live under ſuch a Conſcience,

ence, whose every Accusation is no less than a summons to Death? (*s*) "It is "not for nothing (saith the Historian *Tacitus*) that the wisest men have told us, that "were the hearts of wicked men laid open, "we should see their Swellings and Ulcers, Stripes and Torments; Here a "bruise by Impatience, here a swelling of "Pride, here a deep wound which malice "hath made.

(*s*) *Neque frustra sapientes affirmare soliti sunt, si recludantur Tyrannorum mentes, ictus posse aspici & laniatus.*

It is the good man only that leads a Comfortable and Happy Life, whereas wicked mens Lives are Toilsome and Miserable, *Jeremiah, chapter 9. verse 5. They weary themselves to commit Iniquity.* They take as much or more pains to go to Hell, than good Men do to go to Heaven. (*t*) "Even the things of the Devil are not attained without Labour and Pains, saith "St. *Chrysostom.* How Laborious is our Revenge? How busie our Cruelty? How Watchful and Studious our Lust? What Penance does our Covetousness put us to? How strangely does our Envy possesse us, like an Evil and Malignant Spirit? Which one in *Stobæus* calls, κάκιστον καὶ δικαιότατον Θεὸν, the

(*t*) οὐδὲ τὰ Διαβόλου ἀκμητὰ γίνεται.

Baſeſt Spirit, and yet moſt Juſt, becauſe it puniſhes the Delinquent in the very Act; doing as *Ælian* ſpeaks of the *Polypus*, (*u*) "who, when he wants his prey devours "his own Arms, the ſecret pangs of his Envy gnaw and feed upon himſelf: Thus Men become (as I may ſo ſpeak) Martyrs of the Devil and damnation, and the ſubjects of all thoſe Harms and Miſchiefs, that are of ſins retinue, from which they might be freed; if they would once become Proſelytes to Virtue and Goodneſs.

(u) εἴ τις αὐτῷ γένηται ἀθηρία τῶν ἑαυτοῦ πλοκάμων παρέτραγε.

Their very Enemies could ſay of the *Athenians*, "That there was nothing that "they could count a Feaſt, but τὰ Δέοντα πρᾶξαι "the having done what they ought; and if a Chriſtian cannot outvye thoſe Heathens, if he doth not highly eſteem of the Feaſt of a good Conſcience within him, and the Satisfactions that are to be reaped from a good Life, which are preſent Happineſs in themſelves, and pledges of future Glory; his palate is vitiated, he is no competent judge of Dainties, And as goodneſs will ſhield its followers from all thoſe harms

and

and Miſchiefs that ariſe from Sin, ſo,

Thirdly and Laſtly, Will it free them from the Eternal Harms and Torments, which thoſe who are ſtrangers to Goodneſs ſhall ſuffer in Hell. *Lactantius* was ſo hard in believing the roundneſs of the Earth, that he thought that thoſe *Homines Penſiles* (as they call them) thoſe men that hang on the other Cheek of the Face of the Earth, thoſe *Antipodes* (whoſe feet are directly againſt Ours) muſt needs fall from the Earth; but whither then ſhould they fall? If they fall, they muſt fall upwards, towards Heaven: So good Men, the Spiritual *Antipodes* to Sin, may in ſome ſenſe be ſaid to fall, when they fall to Repentance, to Mortification, and other good Duties; and when they fall off from their Sins; but their fall is upwards, they fall towards Heaven; Hell hath no Power over them; for God hath ſet his mark, ſtampt the Impreſs of his Goodneſs upon them; and that is their Protection from all the Arreſts of Satan; That will keep them out of his dark infernal Priſon: Hell is only a place

for

for Wicked men; 'tis their proper Center, and the Gravity and Heavineſs of their ſins make them tend thither, *Pſalm* 9. 17. *The Wicked ſhall be turned into Hell*, and as the ſtrong Magic of Nature pulls and draws every thing continually to that place, which is ſuitable to it, and to which it belongs; ſo Hell, whereſoever it is, will by a ſtrong ſympathy pull in all ſin, and Magnetically draw it to it ſelf; as on the contrary true Goodneſs is always breathing upwards, and fluttering towards Heaven, ſtriving to Imboſom it ſelf with God.

We may flatter our ſelves with what conceits we pleaſe, but ſo long as we are void of Goodneſs, we do but Dream of Heaven, and I know not what fond Paradiſe; we do but Court a painted Heaven, and woe happineſs in a Picture; the glory of Heaven being nothing elſe but innocence enthron'd, and attir'd her in white Robes, and Goodneſs Triumphant; Goodneſs with a Palm of Victory in her hand, and a Crown upon her Head: And how happy will the Good, the Innocent Man be, when he

ſhall

ſhall receive that Crown, with this deſerved Encomium and Commendation? *Euge bone Serve*! Well done Good and Faithful Servant! What a Raviſhment and Tranſport will it be to him? What an Oleo of High Taſts compounded together? O then let us all be Followers of Goodneſs! This, This, is our beſt Ἀλεξίφαρμον; the beſt Charm againſt all Evils; The beſt Amulet and Preſervative againſt all harms; Our ſafeſt Port, our beſt Haven; here we can never ſuffer Shipwrack, here no ſtorms can come at us to hurt us; here we are above the Sphere of mens Power to harm us; in this bleſſed Station the Torments of Hell cannot reach or faſten upon us. Goodneſs then is our beſt Aſylum, our beſt Sanctuary, our ſafeſt Refuge, from the harms both of Men and Devils; for ſaith St. *Peter*, *Who is that will Harm ye, if ye be followers of that which is Good*? Which God grant we may all be, for his Dear Son Jeſus Chriſt his ſake, to whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all Honour, Glory, and Adoration, both now and Ever, *AMEN*.

FINIS.

Five Sermons lately Publiſhed by the ſame Author, and ſold by *Benj. Billingſley.*

1 A Sermon Preached before the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen of the City of *London* at *Guild-hall.*

2. The neceſſity of Receiving the Holy Sacrament, declared in a Sermon at a Conference of the ſeveral Miniſters of the Deanry of *Braughin*, in the County of *Hertford*, appointed by the Right Reverend Father in God *Henry* Lord Biſhop of *London* to be held at *Ware.*

3. The great Excellency and Uſefulneſs and Neceſſity of Humane Learning.

4. The Nature and Cauſes of hardneſs of *H*eart, Together with the Remedies againſt it.

5. The Things above proved to be the moſt Proper Objects of the Mind and Affections. All Three Preached before the Univerſity, at Great St. *Maries* Church in *Cambridge.*